Demands of Development Officers of LIC

829. SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received any representations from Development Officers of Life Insurance Corporation of India recently; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof and action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The demands made by the Development Officers mainly relate to modifications to the special provisions applicable to them in the nature of work norms based on certain minimum performance. At the instance of the Government, several rounds of meetings have taken place between the representatives of employees and the management of the Life Insurance Corporation of India in order to discuss the demands to the extent possible.

Afforestation by Private Sector

830. SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that private sector has been asking for certain areas to be given to them for planting trees for afforestation; and

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard and what is the policy of Government in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI Z. R. ANSARI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) These requests are mostly from wood based industries manufacturing paper, pulp, oil and fibres. The Government of India Policy is not to allot forest lands to industries for plantation by industry themselves or as joint sector units. It is open to them to enter ino arrangements with small and marginal farmers to produce raw-material for industry on degraded land owned by farmers.

Smuggling of Textiles

831. SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) what is the quantity of textiles smuggled into the country and the total amount involved during the last three years;

(b) whether such large scale smuggling of textiles is causing crisis in textile industry; and

(c) if so what steps Government propose to take in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI RAM NIWAS MIRDHA): (a) to (c) Synthetic yarn and fabrics continue to be sensitive to smuggling. Smuggling is a clandestine activity and it is, therefore, not feasible to estimate its extent and is impact on the domestic textile industry. The anti-smuggling drive throughout the country has been intensified and anti-smuggling machinery particularly at the vulnerable points of the land border and the cost lines and international airports and sea ports has been geared up to combat smuggling of goods including synthetic yarn and fabrics. Close coordination is maintained between all agencies concerned with anti-smuggling. In this with the Textile Policy, reduction of fiscal levies on synthetic fibres and yarn has been made in order to facilitate absorption of increased domestic production.